

Only for the deserving

Johor ruler and his prince will personally vet state award recipients

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JOHOR BARU: Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar, would be strict on conferring state awards and medals in conjunction with his 54th birthday celebration.

A strict vetting process was necessary to ensure that only the deserving would be recognised, said the Sultan.

"I want to see what their service is to the state as well as to the people. As for government servants, one will not automatically get a *Pingat Ibrahim Sultan* (PIS) medal just because one has served 20 years or is 45 years old," he said.

The state ruler added that he would not tolerate apathetic attitude from civil servants and would be more stringent than his late father in giving out the state awards.

He would personally vet the recipients with his prince, the Tunku Mahkota and the Johor council of Royal Court.

Sultan Ibrahim said besides conferring the awards during the celebration in Muar, he would also hand them out during his visits to the various districts.

"There is no time frame. It will give me the opportunity to meet my *rakyat*," said the ruler, who however did not disclose the number of recipients this year.

Sultan Ibrahim said he was also unperturbed by negative comments about him or the royal family in social media sites.

He also rubbished allegations that he had directed the police to clamp down on those writing negative articles about him.



On the awards: Sultan Ibrahim having a discussion with Johor Council of Royal Court secretary Datuk Abdul Rahim Ramli at the Sultan's office in Istana Pasir Pelangi, Johor Baru.

"I cannot be bothered about it. Why should I lower myself?" he said, adding that the police were only acting on their own accord and taking action after receiving reports.

The palace, added Sultan Ibrahim, had nothing to do with it.

"I do not want to think about these people. I only feel sad about their poor upbringing,"

he said.

In relation to the disparaging comments about the Johor royal house, there were cases where people were arrested this year for posting insulting comments on Facebook and blogs.

This includes a 27-year-old quantity surveyor who was apprehended for doing so earlier this month.